

THE JACOBS REPORT

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GOVERNOR SHORES UP BOARD

This week, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced the appointment of two members to the Board of State Canvassers.

The Governor has reappointed Dorothy Jones of Ypsilanti to represent Democrats. Jones retired in July 2003 from United Auto Workers (UAW) where she served for more than 37 years, most recently as executive assistant to UAW President Ron Gettlefinger. She is a former chair of the Michigan Women's Commission and former member of the Advisory Commission for Substance Abuse Services for the State of Michigan.

The Governor has appointed Lyn Bankes of Livonia to replace Eric J. Pelton to represent Republicans. Bankes was appointed to the Wayne County Charter Commission in 1980. From 1985 to 1998, she served as a Michigan State Representative. From 1999 to 2004, she served as the only Republican on the Wayne County Commission. She currently serves in a voluntary capacity as the executive director of the Phoenix Mill Women's Museum.

Jones' and Bankes' terms expire January 31, 2009.

Under state statute, the state central committees of the Michigan Democratic and Republican Parties are required to submit three nominations for consideration by the governor. Those nominations must be submitted to the governor on or before January 10.

Jones was among those names forwarded to Governor Granholm by the Michigan Democratic Party. The Michigan Republican Party failed to submit names by the statutory deadline and, therefore, the Governor was required under Michigan's election law to appoint an individual who was formerly elected as a state officer as a member of the Republican Party. Bankes formerly served as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives.

The Board of State Canvassers is a four-member, bi-partisan, appointed board that certifies election results for state offices and other offices as they are referred to the board by law. Also serving on the board are Katherine DeGrow, a Republican of Eaton Rapids (term expires January 31, 2006) and Doyle O'Connor, a Democrat of Detroit (term expires January 31, 2006.)

The appointments are subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

INSURERS THREATEN RATE HIKES

The president of the Michigan Insurance Coalition said this week that rules banning the use of credit scores while rolling back the insurance base rate could actually lead to higher costs for insurers and policyholders. A spokesperson for the Office of Financial and Insurance Services said most policyholders would see their rates decrease under the proposed rules.

The new rules, currently before the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, would go in to effect on July 1, 2005, and would ban the use of credit scores in determining automobile and home insurance rates unless rejected by the Legislature.

The Insurance Coalition is complaining that large insurance companies would not have enough time to make changes to their policies, and that any problems along the way would drive up costs. They want an additional six months to make changes before the rule goes into effect.

Eric Henning, the president of the coalition, said, "Companies may be forced to spend time and money to rework their systems."

"Insurance companies were informed of the new rules last October," said Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods). "They've had sufficient time to adjust, and I'd be very disappointed if they used this situation as an excuse to run up the bill on consumers."

"We're going to go back to where it used to be before [insurance companies] started using credit scores, said Andy Schor, spokesman for the Office of Financial and Industry Services (OFIS). "It's not necessary, it's not fair, and it's not legal, according to the insurance code."

RAYMOND JAMES CHOOSES SOUTHFIELD OVER TEXAS

One of America's premiere investment services companies announced this week that it would locate a new regional operations center in Southfield, a development made possible by assistance both from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and a Southfield tax abatement.

The announcement by Raymond James and Associates could mean up to 311 new jobs created directly by the company with the potential of another 300 jobs created indirectly.

Raymond James chose Michigan over a site in Texas for the development. The state offered a \$2.1 million single business tax credit, and Southfield is expected to approve a \$193,000 property tax abatement.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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